



California WIC Program Annual Training Summer 2014



Annual Training

WIC vendors are crucial to the success of the WIC Program. We thank you for your commitment to providing nutritious foods for our WIC shoppers. As you know, we provide interactive training when you first become a vendor and then every three years. This newsletter serves as your annual training for 2014.

We also provide you with an annual newsletter of Program policies and procedures. The purpose of this newsletter is to ensure that you are familiar with all Program requirements and updates, which help you stay in compliance with your vendor agreement and be successful in your important role as a WIC authorized vendor.

Please share this newsletter with all your store employees. We hope that your experience as a WIC authorized vendor is a rewarding one. Please keep this newsletter for future reference and training purposes.

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Purpose of WIC

The Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) is a federally-funded nutrition program that helps families by providing nutrition education, breastfeeding support, prescriptions for nutritious food and healthcare referrals. WIC serves low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, and infants and children under the age of five, who have a nutritional need. WIC strives to prevent health problems and to improve participants' health during critical times of growth and development.

The WIC Program provides Food Instruments (FIs), also known as coupons, vouchers or checks, to purchase nutritious foods from WIC authorized vendors. Whether you are a cashier, manager, or owner of a store, you help make the WIC Program a success by providing affordable healthy foods and a positive shopping experience to WIC families.

WIC Mission:

- To safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

8 Steps of a WIC Transaction

There are 8 easy steps to the WIC checkout procedure. Here is a quick review:

1. Request the WIC ID Folder from the WIC Shopper.
2. Ask for the Food Instruments (FIs) being used in the transaction.
3. Check the First Day to Use and Last Day to Use printed on the FI.
4. Group the WIC foods by the FIs. Check for authorized foods and correct quantities.
5. Enter the exact purchase price on each FI.
6. Ask the WIC shopper to sign each FI.
7. Compare the shopper's signature on the FI with the signature on the WIC ID folder.
8. Give the WIC ID folder and receipt back to the shopper.

Minimum Stocking Requirements

As a WIC Vendor you are required to maintain the Minimum Stocking Requirements at all times. The Minimum Stocking Requirements give WIC shoppers access to the foods that they need while shopping at your store. Some WIC foods must be stocked in full quantities at all times in a public area. Other WIC foods are allowed to be stocked in storage on the premises of that store location. All WIC foods must be available at the store. Inventory does not include product on order and not yet delivered.

The Minimum Stocking Requirements were updated on October 17, 2013, when the Vendor Authorization Criteria (VAC) regulations became effective. Minimum Stocking Requirements are listed within the WIC Bulletin Regulations (W.B.R.) §711000. Select the link below to read the full text of the regulation.

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Documents/Regulatory%20Bulletin/WIC-RegulatoryBulletin-2013-01-Attach1.pdf>

Inventory Records

You are required to keep inventory records for a period of three years, per Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 40741(a)(14) and W.B.R. §71000. These sections require vendors to maintain inventory records used for Federal tax reporting purposes. The State agency can also require vendors to maintain other records. Inventory records should be in the form of invoices including both the receiving of goods originally purchased and records of inventory transferred from one store location to another.

Cash register receipts without specific identification of the quantity, unit price and supplemental food items purchased will not be accepted as evidence of supplemental food purchases. For more information on record keeping and to view or print a sample of the required documentation, see "What is an Acceptable Record of Inventory" at:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Pages/WICGrocerVendorMainPage.aspx>

WIC Program Disqualifications

As a WIC authorized vendor, you can avoid Program violations by following State and Federal rules and regulations. A WIC Program violation can result in disqualification from the Program or a civil money penalty in lieu of a disqualification. If you are disqualified, you may not accept WIC FIs.

The disqualification timeframe varies according to the specific violation. To obtain additional information regarding vendor violations and sanctions, please refer to Article 1 in your vendor agreement; Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 246.12; Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Sections 40740 and 40741; & VAC W.B.R. §70000 et. seq.

In addition, the WIC Program and CalFresh Program are required to notify each other of Program disqualifications or adverse actions. For example, if a store is disqualified from WIC, it may also be disqualified from the CalFresh Program. However, if a store is disqualified from the CalFresh Program, the WIC Program **must** disqualify the vendor. The disqualification period for each program must be for the same length of time.

A civil money penalty may be imposed instead of a disqualification if the WIC Program determines there is no other WIC store in that area. You can always refer back to your vendor agreement or contact your WIC Vendor Consultant when you have questions about WIC Program rules.

Appeal Process

Vendors may appeal an adverse action or sanction resulting of; a compliance investigation; on-site monitoring visit; or an audit. The following actions are not appealable:

- Expiration of an agreement with a vendor.
- Departmental termination of a vendor from the WIC Program that has received a final determination by the USDA of termination from the CalFresh Program.

If you decide to appeal an adverse action, remember to appeal within the time frame identified in the letter. Submit your appeal letter to:

Ms. Lisa Alder, Chief
Administrative Appeals
Department of Health Care Services
1029 J Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95814

WIC Logo & Materials

WIC logo usage is directed by USDA and VAC W.B.R. §71400. Items using the correct California WIC acronym and logo are available to all vendors. Posters, decals and shelf-talkers are just some of the items that you can request for your store by correctly filling out the order form. Please remember to use the most current form available and fill in your six digit vendor number. If your vendor number is not listed or an old form is used, your order will not be processed. Below is the link to the most recent order form (OSP 508) available on the WIC website:

<http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/osp/wic/osp508.pdf>



Incentive Items

If your store is determined to be an Above-50-Percent (A-50), you may only provide specific WIC approved incentive items to your customers. Incentive items must be purchased at a wholesale cost of under two dollars (\$2). Incentives can only be offered once a day to a participant family and only at the time of transaction. Some examples of allowable incentive items that can be offered are: prepackaged fresh fruit and vegetables, mature beans, peas or lentils, and prepackaged 100% corn tortillas.

If you are not an A-50 vendor, you shall not single out WIC participants and offer incentives to only WIC participants using FIs. Examples of incentives would include offering cash, gifts, or using a point system for FIs when redeemed by participants in exchange for free items. Incentives offered to WIC Participants must be offered to all customers.

For more information regarding incentive item requirements, see the VAC W.B.R. §70800.

Vendor Claim Process

When the WIC Program determines a vendor has committed a violation that affects payments that have been made to the vendor, the WIC Program will establish a claim (a debt or account receivable that is established showing the vendor owes money back to the Program).

The WIC Program may delay payment or establish a claim in the amount of the full purchase price of each FI. For example, a FI could have included an overcharge or charged the WIC Program for foods that weren't purchased. If payment of the claim is not received, the WIC Program will pursue further collection action. The vendor contract will be terminated if the claim is ultimately not paid.

In addition to denying payment, the WIC Program may sanction the vendor in accordance with Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 40741(a)(14) and W.B.R. §70500. A vendor will be notified in writing when an investigation reveals a violation, unless the WIC Program determines that notifying the vendor would compromise an investigation.

If you have any questions about the vendor sanction and disqualification process, contact your WIC Vendor Consultant at 1-855-WIC-STOR (1-855-942-7867).

WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide

The WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide (WAFL SG) is the official document that outlines the foods authorized by the California WIC Program. The most recent version is dated July 5, 2011 and is provided in both English and Spanish. We recommend that you keep a copy at each register to refer to during a WIC transaction. The WAFL SG, along with answers to frequently asked questions, is available online at: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Pages/WIC-AuthorizedFoodListWAFL.aspx>

Infant Formula Purchase Requirements

You may only purchase infant formula from wholesalers, distributors, or retailers who are licensed in accordance with California law. To verify that distributors, wholesalers and retailers have a valid seller's permit in California, go to the Board of Equalization website at:

<https://efile.boe.ca.gov/boeweb/services/verification.jsp?action=SALES>

You can also buy infant formula directly from one of the following manufacturers: Nestle, USA; Mead Johnson and Company; Nutricia North America; PBM Nutritionals; Solus Products, LLC; and Abbott Laboratories. If you purchase infant formula outside of California, it must be purchased from a wholesaler, distributor, or retailer that is a licensed supplier in the state of purchase, and is included on that state's WIC Program list of authorized suppliers of infant formula.



For more information about WIC Vendor requirements regarding infant formula, please review VAC W.B.R. §70900.

Vendor Complaint Process

To report Program abuse or fraud, or to file a complaint against another vendor, local WIC Agency, or WIC shopper, you may use one of the following options:

- **Call:** 800-852-5770
- **Write:** California WIC Program and Business Integrity Section,
3901 Lennane Drive
Sacramento, CA 95834
- **Email:** WICABUSE@cdph.ca.gov

When filing a complaint please include when, where, and who was involved and how the activity was inappropriate.

Feedback

We strive to develop a newsletter that is beneficial to our vendors. Therefore, we are asking for your feedback regarding our newsletter. Let us know how we can improve the newsletter, what topics you would like included, and things you like or dislike. Please send your suggestions and comments via email to WICVendorEd@cdph.ca.gov. We thank you in advance!